

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 8, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood,
Secretary U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE,
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Recovery act – High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program: Application
by the State of Washington**

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing in strong support of the proposal submitted by the State of Washington in response to the United States Department of Transportation's Funding Opportunity Announcement for High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program Funding.

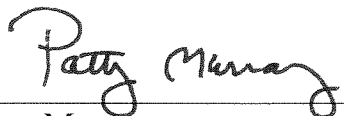
The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has submitted a proposal for funding for the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor (PNWRC), one of the 11 federally designated high speed rail corridors in the United States. This corridor traverses the region from the Canadian border across Washington into Oregon, and is of vital regional and national economic and strategic importance. This has been a long-time regional priority, and since 1994 over \$1.1 billion has been invested through public-private partnerships along the Amtrak Cascades corridor to realize the ideal of high speed rail service in the Pacific Northwest.

It is our understanding that WSDOT has met with the major stakeholders and that the proposal consists of projects that are "shovel ready," can be completed within 2 years of obligation, and have independent utility. It is estimated that funding for these projects will promptly create at least 3,112 direct and 1,750 indirect shovel ready jobs throughout the Washington state economy. These jobs will be spread from our northern border to the Columbia River, in both rural and urban communities. Further, the project plan is to increase existing rail seating capacity by 582,540 passengers per year – a sustainable benefit that will last long beyond the term of the project itself. The project plan is to eliminate 49,983 minutes of delay annually. By reducing transit time in the PNWRC, and by diverting travelers to rail, greenhouse gas emissions will decrease and energy efficiency will increase for hundreds of thousands of people for years into the future. This project

will support the goals of the U.S. Department of Transportation by increasing energy efficient rail mobility along this important economic corridor.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this proposal.

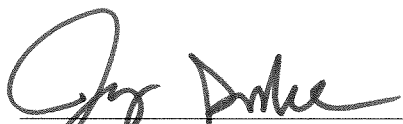
Sincerely,



Patty Murray
U.S. Senator



Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senator



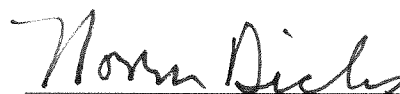
Jay Inslee
Member of Congress



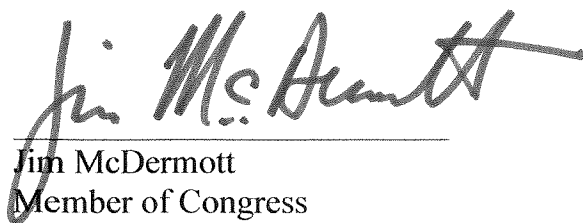
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Brian Baird
Member of Congress



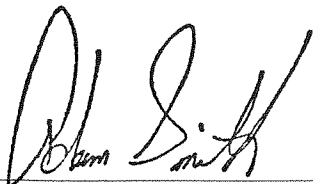
Norm Dicks
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress